

One Day Is Fine and Next Is Black by TolkienScholar

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Angst, Family

Language: English

Characters: Jonathan B.

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Chapters: 1

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Summary: Drabble (x3). Tag to Ep. 1x4. Will is dead, and Mom is going crazy, and suddenly it's all just more than Jonathan can handle.

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MC4A Fill Number: Terms of Service, Fill #5; By Any Other Name, Fill #6; Fem Power Challenge, Fill #6; Eternal Rhapsody, Fill #1; Snicket Fence, Fill #4; Starry Strums, Fill #3

Individual Challenges: Cracked Façade (N); Tissue Warning (N); Interesting Times (N); New Fandom Smell (Y); Themes & Things A (Death; N); Themes & Things B (Loss; N); Themes & Things C (Pillow; N); In a Flash (N)

Representations: Jonathan Byers; Joyce Byers; Byers Family; Death; Madness and Stability; Taking Care of Family; Classic Rock

Bonus Challenges: A Long Dog, Second Verse (Machismo – Sobbing; Spinning Plates)

Spring Bingo Space Address: 5C (Music)

Word Count: 300

Tag to Ep. 1x4: "The Body"

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The door slams shut behind you, and you stand in the middle of your room, breathing hard. Your heart is racing, and for a second it's the only sound you can hear. You feel lightheaded and wonder if you're going to pass out, and then you hope you do because then you won't have to deal with... this.

Your heartrate is slowing, and as the sound fades you can hear Mom again, a high, panicked whimpering noise that just *sounds* crazy. You throw yourself across the bed and grab your headphones because *no*, you are *not* listening to this anymore, but then it's Will's mixtape in the cassette player, and how can you play that when you know he'll never hear it again?

You rip off the headphones and throw them across the room. As they hit the floor, it dimly occurs to you that it'll take months to save up for a new pair if they break, but that thought seems like it belongs to someone else, someone whose brother wasn't just fished out of the quarry and whose Mom isn't losing her mind.

You hear Mom whimper again, and a nagging voice in your head says, *Gotta get up. Gotta go take care of her.* But that thought doesn't belong to you either; it belongs to the guy who used to be able to do something, who if he could just make enough breakfasts and take enough extra shifts and listen enough and protect enough could somehow hold his broken little family together. But now Will's gone and Mom's totally checked out, and it really doesn't matter anymore if you get up and go to her or just cram a pillow over your head and try to block out her sobbing.

Or drown it out with your own.